

*TO the Kings most Excellent Maiesty, the Lords Spirituall and Temporall,  
and Commons in this present Parliament assembled.*

*The humble Petition of Thomas Stanley.*

**M O S T G R A T I O V S   S O V E R A I G N E ,**

**T**HIS great grievance presented vnto your Maiesty and this most honorable high Court of Parliament is for the relife of the poore, miserable, sicke, sore and distressed members of Christ Iesu which now doe troupe and swarne in and about the Citie of London as former ages were never acquainted; withbesides a number of lewde and idle people resorting to this Citie, which liue by cheating, lifting and stealing, and make a pray of Citizens goods, as is too well knowne, and grieuously felt London (dread Soueraigne) is as the meane Ocean whither these lewde people resort vnto ; and Middlesex and Surrey are as two armes of the Ocean feeding the same, for remedying which mischies and inconuenience. There was by the Honourable Citie of London in the yeere of our Lord God, 1552. a devise made for relief of all the poore, the sturdy vacabond, the ydle beggar, and such prisoners as were quit at the Sessions as were within the said Citie : and they found three manner of poore that were to be prouided for.

1. By impotency,	And each of these were divided into	1. The fatherlesse, or poore mans child,	1. The vvwounded Soldier, or burst person.	1. The Rioter,
2. Casualty.		2. The maymed, blind, or lame,	2. The decayed Householder.	2. The Vacatound.
3. By unthriftiness,	three kinds	3. The leaper, he vwhich had the falling-sicknes.	3. The person visited with the plague.	3. The yidle person.

For therelife of all these nine seuerall sorts of poore, faire houses were founded and giuen to the Lord Maior, Citizens and Comminality of the Citie of London, with great lands and reuenues thereto belonging by Religious Kings, your Maiesties Progenitors.

I. Chrits Hospitall.



Was prouided for the poore fatherlesse child that he might be harboured, clothed, fed, taught, and vertuously brought vp.

2. Saint Thomas Hospitall.

Was prouided for the miserable aged, sore and sicke persons, and the same to harbour, and by Phisicke and Surgery to cure.

3 Bridewell Hospitall.

Was prouided to be a house of Occupations, wherein as well the child, when he is brought vp, and growne to yeeres, and found vnapt to Learning, and no honest person desireth or would haue his seruice, may there be exercised or occupied ; as also the sore, and sicke when they be cured in St. Thomas Hospitall, may not be suffered to wander in the Common-wealthe as they haue beene accustomed : but shall in Bridewell be set on worke and thiere exercised and not be set at liberty, and from a sicke Begger make a whole Thiefe. And to these should bee brought the sturdy and yidle, and such persons as are quit at the Sessions, that there they may be set to labour.

King Edward the sixt likewise gaue to the said Hospitall of Bridewell, all the implements and household-stuffe of the said House of Bridewell, and all manner of householdstuffe vtensals and necessaries which did belong to the Hospitall of the Sauoy being of great value, and foure hundred & fiftie pounds by the yeere. The same time was giuen to Bridewell & S. Thomas Hospitall, now worth as is supposed, yearly foure thousand pound, and besides great Lands and Legacies ouer and aboue the saide Kings Grant, haue beene and are giuen with the Rents of the House of Bridewell as now they make it seauen or eight hundred pound by the yeere as shall be proued.

Some reasons moued the Petitioner to exhibite this information : first, whatsoever is done to or for the Poore, the Lame, the Widow, and Fatherlesse, is done to Christ himselfe, and hee is able and will repay it: besides the Petitioner being of great age, and small time to continue in this world, hauing all the Motives and Causes of the true discouery of the Foundation of Bridewell deliuiered vnto him by that Reverend deceased great Patriot of his Country, the Lord Chiefe-Justice Popham commaunding the Petitioner if he liued vntill a Parliament he should exhibite them to the said house, for that he could thinke of no assured way but by Parliament rightly to establish the two Hospitals of Bridewell and St. Thomas in Southwarke, that those great Lands, summes of money, and other charitable Legacies giuen to the said two Houses. May be employed according as it was intended by the first Foundations and Doners thereof, So hauing done my duty as farre as in me lyeth. First, to God, to my Prince and Country, and to that Honourable deceased Person, In all submision I leauue the rest to your High Maiestie, and graue, great and most Noble consideration of this Honourable Parliament, daily praying God to moue their hearts (among the great and waughty affaires of this Kingdom) to take compassion of the poore, and rectifie their Hospitals, and that your most excellent Maiestie will Eye the poore Creatures with compassion. And bee vnto them as that good King your Grandfather was to his Subiects the poore mans King.